

# FLY FISHERS OF THE BITTERROOT



## NEWSLETTER FOR MAY, 2009

### THE MEETING

We will meet Tuesday, May 5 at BJ's located at 900 N. 1st Street, Hamilton. (It hasn't moved from that last time we convened there.) General fish tales start at 6:00 pm and the program starts at 7:00 pm. Dinners and your favorite libation are available. As a rule, the Club meets the first Tuesday of every month except for the months of July and August (but see below about the July Pig Roast).

### THE SPEAKER

David Schmetterling, FWP fish research biologist from Missoula, will speak on the effects of the removal of the Milltown Dam on the Clark Fork and Blackfoot fisheries. Hear if the stories about fish that glow in the dark are true. Hear if the "no-hatch year" will happen. Do you really want to live your life in happy rumors and half truths? Straight skinny time.

## **THOSE WHO SPAKE**

Chris Clancy, our Bitterroot River FWP fish biologist, gave us his annual update on the Bitterroot in a well attended meeting. And, yes, we do have whirling disease but it seems to be holding mainly in the East Fork. Fish counts in the upper stretches are far larger than the lower but Chris made an interesting point. While his information is anecdotal, he believes that fish caught per angling hour is not really different between the upper and lower stretches. (That's probably because Cliff and Leon fish upper stretches.) Bottom line, our Bitterroot is in good condition. Thank you, Chris.

## **THE PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE**

### **From the Presidents Raft:**

During my recent travels, I had the opportunity to see some of our beautiful country. We drove as far south as San Diego and eastward to Branson, MO. Nope, no fishing. Didn't even take any gear. But I did find some areas in Wyoming and Idaho I want to fish on another trip.

The highlight of this trip was the Annual East Idaho Fly Tying and Fishing Expo in Idaho Falls. This was their 16<sup>th</sup> event. If you want to see some world class fly tiers and just a great group of people demonstrating and teaching their skills, then this is one show you'll want to see every year. I discovered it three years ago and haven't missed one since. It's a "must see" event. It is usually held on the third Friday and Saturday of April. Take a look at this year's website ([srcexpo.com](http://srcexpo.com)) and plan to attend next spring. You'll be glad you did.

Get ready for summer. It'll be here sooner than you think. The big event this year, our and hopefully annual Pig Roast. Rich Morrissey and Bob Fickett are heading up this event with plans for some great Food, Fun and Fellowship. Watch this Newsletter and make a strong effort to attending the monthly meetings for more information as it develops. Great job Rich and Bob. I'm looking forward to it. Our next regular meeting will be 7 pm, Tuesday, May 5<sup>th</sup> at BJ's. Please join us.

Okay everyone, as always be careful on the water and especially for the next several weeks. Have fun and stay safe.

Ed Couchman

## **PIG ROAST**

In response to all those phone calls and emails I have not received, here is what we know to date. It's a happenin' thang! Saturday, July 11 at Lake Como. Start time is 5 pm. The Club will provide: roast pig (and two inebriated roasters), Couchman Dutch oven baked beans, paper plates, plastic tableware, plastic cups, bbq sauces, paper towels, extra tp, garbage bags and so forth. There is an internal debate about whether the Club should also provide a keg of beer or have everybody go BYOB. More on this later. (There are no restrictions on having alcohol at Lake Como.) But, in any event, if you are drinking something other than the nectar of the gods, plan on supplying that yourself.

All Club members and Club wannabes plus guests are eligible to attend. Bring your houseguests. There will be no cost per se but we will pass the hat for donations. You are also asked to bring a side dish. If your last name starts with a letter in the following categories, please bring the item(s) indicated. Our preliminary estimates are that about 60 to 70 folks will attend. So bring your item(s) for about 30 folks. If your last name starts with:

A thru G: bring a potato salad, pasta salad or green salad

H thru L: bring rolls, corn muffins or potato chips

M thru R: bring desserts

S thru Z: bring appetizers

We will be in the second picnic area on the north (right) side of Lake Como. There are five large picnic tables and several of us will bring additional folding tables. You should bring camp chairs for your party. There is an outhouse. The Forest Service levies a \$5.00 parking fee per vehicle. These permits can be obtained at Forest Service offices throughout the valley and there are forms to fill out at the Lake. For us old farts, the Golden Eagle Pass is sufficient.

There will be casting contests for accuracy and distance. Some rumors are circulating about a cast off between panda food and graphite. In addition, we are working on a spey casting demo and lessons. Modest prizes will be available.

Now, listen up folks, it's impossible to plan this kind of event without knowing fairly accurately as to the number of attendees. There will be signup sheets at our next two regular monthly member meetings. In addition, you can call Rich Morrissey at 381-5611 but **PLEASE** tell us if you're coming and how many will come with you.

## **BITTERROOT DUNK SEASON INAUGURATED!**

In a breathtakingly early move, one of our senior members managed a Bitterroot Dunk in raft disembarkation. Cripes! It was barely April when this graceful move was accomplished. It was awesome and in slow motion. It started with a slo-mo lateral move of the feet off the bottom of the river followed by a classic bottom first splash. While the judges were impressed with the semi-controlled movements and the long elapsed time of the dunk, no points will be allowed. The water was only knee high and, thus, the dunk was ineligible. However, the member did manage to wet himself under his waders, causing him to insist on rowing most of the balance of the (cold) float. His raft mates took note of this unusual but welcome development. The raft owner is reported to have greased the sides of his raft in hopes of repeating this most welcome outcome.

### **From the Hamilton Chapter of Trout Unlimited:**

- Bridge Access Bill HB190 is signed. The bill guaranteeing access at bridges on public roads, HB190, has been signed into law by the Governor. This editorial from the Billings-Gazette describes the signing, which was attended by the Governor and Attorney General Steve Bullock. Although a lot of groups were involved, the lion's share of the credit goes to Montana Trout Unlimited, whose staff worked diligently for the last two years to achieve a unique and truly bipartisan agreement.  
<http://www.billingsgazette.net/articles/2009/04/15/opinion/gazette/50-gazetteopinion.txt>
- Snow far, snow good! The linked article from the Helena Independent Record describes a report on Montana's snowpack levels presented to the Montana Drought Advisory Committee.  
[http://www.helenair.com/articles/2009/04/17/top/top/50st\\_090417\\_snowpack.txt](http://www.helenair.com/articles/2009/04/17/top/top/50st_090417_snowpack.txt)

### **7th Annual Trout Unlimited Women's Fly Fishing Clinic**

Hey Ladies, forget spring cleaning and come learn all there is to know about fly fishing!!

Date: May 9, 2009

Time: 10 a.m. - 4 p.m.

Where: The Teller Slack Barn

Cost: \$50 and includes a Trout Unlimited Membership and a catered lunch.

Learn how to cast efficiently and effectively, identify and select flies, choose and wear the right equipment, tie fishing knots, read water and know where fish live, and know local river knowledge.

Sign up at Fishhaus Tackle in Hamilton.

For more information contact Jenny West at 363-3397 ([jennywest@yahoo.com](mailto:jennywest@yahoo.com)) or Bill Bean 363-6158 ([fishhaus@montana.com](mailto:fishhaus@montana.com)).

- **2009 Information on Painted Rocks Lake**

DNRC Employee Larry Schock has responsibility for managing the water flows from Painted Rocks Lake. Over the course of the season, Larry issues periodical reports on what is happening with Painted Rocks water. Here is his first message:

Hello Everyone:

As we approach spring and the reservoir begins to fill we will start to gradually increase the releases from the reservoir in anticipation of it filling and spilling during spring runoff. The initial increase will be in the 20-30 cfs range and the subsequent increases will usually be in the 50-75 cfs range. The frequency of the adjustments will be based upon how warm it gets and how fast the run off occurs this spring (if it ever gets here!). The outflow from the reservoir is currently at approximately 80 cfs. It is expected that sometime within the next week (depending upon the reservoir level and the weather) the outflow will be increased to approximately 100 cfs.

Please contact me if you have any questions.

Larry A. Schock, CFM  
DNRC Water Resources Division  
Missoula Regional Office  
(406) 721-4284 or [lschock@mt.gov](mailto:lschock@mt.gov)

- **Heads up for 30<sup>th</sup> Annual BRTU Banquet**

This year marks the 30<sup>th</sup> annual fundraising banquet for our chapter. The date has been set for September 25, 2009 at the Bitterroot River Inn and we are once more going to have Riversong Catering provide the meal. Be sure to mark the date on your calendar.

We will provide more details over the summer as plans firm up, but anyone wishing to help out or provide a donation is encouraged to contact Marshall Bloom at [drtrout@mtbloom.net](mailto:drtrout@mtbloom.net)

## **THE ERRATA**

### **Fly Tying:**

Fly tying, Wednesday evenings at the Brewery in Hamilton, 5:30 pm to 8:00 pm. I understand that about dozen stalwarts of steady hand and failing eyesight are showing each week. Bring your favorite pattern or just come to observe. Greg

Chester and Phil Romans are usually there. You know you'll lose some flies. We hope to see some of you.

**New Members:**

Sue Maffei and Michael McKee have joined our Club most recently. Say hello!

**Cruises:**

The Smith River trip is full. However, Cruise Director Pierre reports that ice will come off Georgetown Lake, maybe, sometime, perhaps, briefly. He's thinking about a group outing to Georgetown sometime around the first of June and other, more distant, destinations. Meanwhile, keep tying those chironomids.

**For Fun:**

Remember to keep your words soft and tender, for tomorrow you may have to eat them.

## **THE AUTHOR**

It's still me because nobody else has experienced the temporary insanity which caused me to volunteer. But I'm always open to suggestions. You can reach me at 406-381-5611 or **rich@rkymtn.net**. I encourage intelligent input and generally discourage the other kind. Rich